Mycophenolate mofetil for refractory chronic graftversus-host disease

Haematologica 2007; 88:(10)e142

We read with great interest the study by Busca *et al.*,¹ reporting the efficacy of (MMF) in refractory cGvHD. In their cohort of patients, the overall response rate to MMF was high (72%), and the toxic profile was considered acceptable. The efficacy of MMF was also demonstrated by decreasing the steroid dose in those responder patients. However, two considerations should be made. The first one concerns the patients' selection. The authors treated patients with localized cGvHD and the therapy should not be performed in this setting of patients.² Furthermore, the authors did not detail how many patients with limited cGvHD achieved a complete or partial remission.

The second consideration concerns, infectious complications. Indeed, infections occurred in 44% of evaluable patients, but it was not specified in detail which kind of infections there were. Probably, this high rate of infections, reported by others,³ is related to several factors including the strong immunosuppressive activity of MMF.

L. Castagna, Oncology-Hematology Department, Istituto Clinico HUMANITAS, via Manzoni 56, Rozzano (MI), Italy Tel: +39.0282244587 Fax: +39.0282244590

References

- Busca A, Locatelli F, Marmont F, Audisio E, Falda M: Response to mycophenolate mofetil therapy in refractory chronic graftversus-host disease Haematologica 2003; 88 : 837-39.
- Shulman H, Sullivan KM, Weiden PL, McDonald GB, Striker GE, Sale GE et al. Chronic graft versus host disease in man. A long term clinicopathologic study of 20 Seattle patients. Am J Med 1980; 69: 204-217
- Baudard M, Vincent A, Moreau P, Kergueris MF, Harousseau JL, Milpied N. Mycophenolate mofetil for the treatment of acute and chronic GVHD is effective and well tolerated but induces a high risk of infectious complications: a series of 21 BM or PBSC transplant patients. Bone Marrow Transplant 2002; 30:287-95.